

REMARKS

Applicant is pleased to acknowledge the allowance of Claims 11-13, 23 and 24 in the Official Action of July 22, 2003. In response to the Examiner's comments on the specification, applicant has added the section headings to the specification to comply with 37 C.F.R. §1.77(b). In a separate Letter To The Official Draftsman, a corrected drawing is submitted with the correction approved by the Examiner.

Dependent Claim 8 indicated by the Examiner to contain allowable subject matter has been canceled and rewritten in independent form as new Claim 28 which contains all of the limitations previously recited in Claims 1 and 8. Claim 15 has been amended to be dependent on Claim 13 to overcome the Examiner's objection. In view of the Examiner's comments, applicant believes that Claims 15 and 28 are in condition for allowance.

Claim 1 has been amended to more distinctly define the invention over the cited prior art. Claim 1 now recites that the discharge port has an opening located at or close to the predetermined pivot axis "of the blade unit" for discharging the fluid "through said opening directly to the skin" at or near the predetermined pivot axis. This function of the discharge opening is supported by the specification at page 9, lines 4-7, which discloses as follows:

"The fluid delivered through the discharge port passes through a hole in the elastomeric guard element 6 conveniently formed by one or more of the pockets 8, so that it is supplied directly to the skin which is sliding over the guard surface during shaving."

In contrast to this claim requirement, Schauble 4,809,432, the primary reference cited by the Examiner, does not disclose a razor in which the discharge port is arranged to discharge the fluid "directly to the skin" at or near the pivot axis of the blade unit.

Claim 1 recites a razor comprising a blade unit carrying structure (2) on which a blade unit (1) is permanently or detachably mounted for pivotal movement relative to the blade unit carrying structure (2) about a predetermined pivot axis (14)

extending longitudinally through the blade unit (1). Claim 1 also recites a delivery system for conducting a fluid dispensed from a reservoir connected to the blade unit carrying structure to at least one discharge port (45), wherein the discharge port has an opening located at or close to the predetermined pivot axis (14) of the blade unit for discharging the fluid through the opening directly to the skin at or near the predetermined pivot axis. The advantage of locating the discharge port on or near the pivot axis of the blade unit is discussed at page 2, lines 10-15 of the specification as follows:

"By arranging the fluid to be discharged through a port located on or very near the pivot axis of the blade unit, the discharge can occur essentially at the same location, preferably at a guard surface in front of the blade or blades, irrespective of the pivotal movements of the blade unit, and this advantageous result can be achieved with the discharge port being defined by a part which remains stationary with the blade unit carrying structure."

In the Official Action, Claims 1-3 and 5-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 as anticipated by Schauble 4,809,432. To support this rejection, the Examiner asserted that in Schauble the discharge port opening is defined by a part 226 (passageway) shown in Figures 8 and 9. The Examiner further asserted that the discharge port has a opening at or close to the predetermined pivot axis (Figures 7 and 8). Presumably, the predetermined pivot axis of Schauble is the axis provided by the hinge 223. However, this pivot axis is nowhere near the point of discharge of the emollient from the razor head assembly 214 to the skin. Before it can be discharged from the razor head assembly 214, the emollient must travel from the passageway 226 to an infeed passageway 238 and into an emollient distributor device 246 consisting of channels 248, 250, 252 and 254 which stream from a well 256 to the edge 258 of the razor blade 242. See column 4, line 62, to column 5, line 14. Clearly, the Schauble reference does not satisfy the claim requirement of a discharge port opening located at or close to the predetermined pivot axis of the blade unit for discharging the fluid through the opening directly to the skin at or

near the predetermined pivot axis. Accordingly, applicant believes that the claim define patentable subject matter and requests the §102 rejection to be withdrawn.

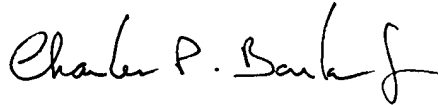
In the Official Action, Claims 9, 10, 16, 17 and 19-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C §103(a) as obvious over Schauble in view of Hackmyer 3,726,009. Like Schauble, the Hackmyer reference fails to disclose the feature of a discharge port opening located at or close to the predetermined pivot axis of the blade unit for discharging the fluid through the opening directly to the skin at or near the predetermined pivot axis. In Hackmyer, a blade and guard unit 22 is fixed to a holder 23 mounted on an aerosol lather dispenser 21 provided with a tilt-to-dispense valve. The dispenser 21 is provided with a valve assembly 24 including a tiltable or toggle action valve stem 25 to which the holder 23 is attached. The blade and guard unit 22 is not capable of pivoting relative to the holder 23. Only the valve stem 25 is capable of tilting about a position at the top of the dispenser 21. Clearly, the tilting axis of the valve stem 25 is remote from the slot 22d through which the lather is delivered to the shaving surface. Since the lather is not discharged directly to the skin through an opening located at or close to the predetermined pivot axis of the blade unit, applicant believes that the claims define patentable subject matter over the Hackmyer reference and requests the §103 rejection to be withdrawn.

Claims 25 and 26, which are dependent on Claim 1, define further features of the invention. Claim 25 recites that the discharge port is defined by a tubular member, and the blade unit includes an elastomeric element surrounding and sealing against the tubular member adjacent the discharge port. Claim 26 recites that the discharge port is defined by a tubular member which extends through the blade unit and terminates at a position at or adjacent to the pivot axis of the blade unit for discharging the fluid directly to the skin. Claim 27 is dependent on Claim 26 and recites that the blade unit includes an elastomeric element surrounding and sealing against the tubular member adjacent the discharge port. Since the above features of the invention recited in dependent Claims 25-27 are not disclosed or suggested

by the prior art references of record, applicant believes that Claims 25-27 define patentable subject matter over the cited references.

For the foregoing reasons, applicant submits that the pending claims define patentable subject matter and requests allowance of all claims in this case.

Respectfully submitted,



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Listing Of Claims - Application No. 09/919,992

1. (Currently Amended) A razor comprising a blade unit carrying structure on which a blade unit is permanently or detachably mounted for pivotal movement relative to the blade unit carrying structure about a predetermined pivot axis extending longitudinally through the blade unit, and a delivery system for conducting a fluid dispensed from a reservoir connected to the blade unit carrying structure to at least one discharge port, wherein the discharge port has an opening located at or close to the predetermined pivot axis of the blade unit for discharging the fluid through said opening directly to the skin ~~to the blade unit at a guard surface~~ at or near the predetermined pivot axis.

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2. (Previously Presented) A razor according to claim 1, wherein the discharge port opening is defined by a part which remains stationary with respect to the blade unit carrying structure during pivotal movement of the blade unit about the predetermined axis.

3. (Previously Presented) A razor according to claim 2, wherein the stationary part is not mechanically coupled directly to the blade unit.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Previously Presented) A razor according to claim 1, wherein the blade unit includes a channel for distributing fluid delivered through the discharge port across the blade unit in the direction of the pivot axis.

6. (Previously Presented) A razor according to claim 5, wherein the channel extends substantially parallel to the pivot axis.

7. (Previously Presented) A razor according to claim 6, wherein the channel is open continuously along the length thereof to allow fluid to pass out of the channel.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Previously Presented) A razor according to claim 1, wherein the blade unit carrying structure is movably connected to a supporting structure and is movable relative to the supporting structure for actuating a valve included in the delivery system to control flow of fluid to the discharge port.

10. (Previously Presented) A razor according to claim 9, wherein the blade unit carrying structure is hingedly coupled to the supporting structure for the valve to be actuated by movement of the blade unit carrying structure caused by pressing the blade unit against the skin during shaving.

11. (Previously Presented) A razor comprising a blade unit carrying structure on one end of which a blade unit is permanently or detachably mounted for pivotal movement relative to the carrying structure about a predetermined pivot axis extending longitudinally through the blade unit, an opposite end of the blade unit carrying structure being hingedly connected to a supporting structure, a delivery system for conducting a fluid to the blade unit from a reservoir, the delivery system including a valve for controlling supply of fluid to the blade unit, the blade unit carrying structure being coupled to the valve for the valve to be actuated by displacement of the blade unit carrying structure relative to the supporting structure caused by pressing the blade unit against the skin during shaving, and the blade unit carrying structure being resiliently biased to close the valve when the blade unit is

lifted clear of the skin, and wherein the blade unit carrying structure and the supporting structure are integrally connected by at least one flexible web which defines a second pivot axis about which the blade carrying structure is pivotable relative to the supporting structure.

12. (Previously Presented) A razor blade unit carrying structure on one end of which a blade unit is permanently or detachably mounted for pivotal movement relative to the carrying structure about a predetermined pivot axis extending longitudinally through the blade unit, the carrying structure including a delivery duct for conducting a fluid supplied from a reservoir to the blade unit, an opposite end of the carrying structure being hingedly coupled to a supporting structure for a valve which is operable to control supply of fluid to the delivery duct from the reservoir to be actuated by displacement of the blade unit carrying structure relative to the supporting structure at the hinge coupling therebetween caused by pressing the blade unit against the skin during shaving, and wherein the blade unit carrying structure and the supporting structure are integrally connected by at least one flexible web which defines a second pivot axis about which the blade carrying structure is pivotable relative to the supporting structure.

13. (Previously Presented) A razor according to claim 11; wherein the blade unit carrying structure and the supporting structure are integrally connected.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently Amended) A razor as defined in claim 13 ~~14~~, wherein the supporting structure comprises a ring to which the blade unit carrying structure is integrally connected by a pair of laterally opposed webs.

16. (Previously Presented) A razor according to claim 9, wherein the reservoir is formed by a container having a rim surrounding the valve, and the supporting structure is firmly attached to the container at the rim thereof.

17. (Previously Presented) A razor according to claim 16, wherein the supporting structure has a friction or snap-fit engagement with the container rim.

18. (Previously Presented) A razor according to claim 15, wherein the blade unit carrying structure has a stop for abutment with the container rim to define an end position from which the blade unit carrying structure is pivotable to actuate the valve.

19. (Previously Presented) A razor according to claim 16, wherein the valve includes a valve member protruding beyond the container rim and into an inlet aperture formed by the blade unit carrying structure.

20. (Previously Presented) A razor according to claim 19, wherein the inlet aperture is defined by an annular sealing member.

21. (Previously Presented) A razor according to claim 20, wherein the valve member cooperates with an annular valve seat and is capable of tilting to open the valve.

22. (Previously Presented) A razor according to claim 9, wherein the blade unit carrying structure comprises a hollow stem structure extending from a flanged base, the base being engagable by a finger of a hand in which the razor is held for selectively displacing the blade unit carrying structure to actuate the valve.

23. (Previously Presented) A razor according to claim 11, wherein the blade unit is supported by the blade unit carrying structure with its longitudinal axis substantially parallel to the second pivot axis defined by the web.

24. (Previously Presented) A razor according to claim 12, wherein the blade unit is supported by the blade unit carrying structure with its longitudinal axis substantially parallel to the second pivot axis defined by the web.

25. (New) A razor according to claim 1, wherein the discharge port is defined by a tubular member, and the blade unit includes an elastomeric element surrounding and sealing against the tubular member adjacent the discharge port.

26. (New) A razor according to claim 1, wherein the discharge port is defined by a tubular member extending through said blade unit and terminating at a position at or adjacent to the pivot axis of the blade unit for discharging the fluid directly to the skin.

27. (New) A razor according to claim 26, wherein the blade unit includes an elastomeric element surrounding and sealing against the tubular member adjacent the discharge port.

28. (New) A razor comprising a blade unit carrying structure on which a blade unit is permanently or detachably mounted for pivotal movement relative to the blade unit carrying structure about a predetermined pivot axis extending longitudinally through the blade unit, and a delivery system for conducting a fluid dispensed from a reservoir connected to the blade unit carrying structure to at least one discharge port, wherein the discharge port has an opening located at or close to the predetermined pivot axis for discharging the fluid to the blade unit at a guard

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surface at or near the predetermined pivot axis, and wherein the discharge port is defined by a tubular member, and the blade unit includes an elastomeric skin contacting element having a lip surrounding and sealing against the tubular member adjacent the discharge port.
